

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

161402Z Dec 05

UNCLAS PARIS 008502

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [FR](#) [UNESCO](#)

SUBJECT: UNESCO HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON HUMAN SECURITY

DEC 12-13

[¶1.](#) A high-level working meeting on Human Security was held December 12 and 13 at UNESCO headquarters. The purpose of the meeting was to advise on a "major publication" on human security that is planned for [2007](#).

[¶2.](#) The high-level working meeting (note: "high-level working meeting" is not itself an official UNESCO meeting category) was convened by UNESCO's sector for Social and Human Sciences to advise on a "major publication" on human security planned, for 2007. According to Moufida Goucha, chief of the UNESCO human security program, human security has been the subject of an "intellectual debate" since the 1990's and is now a priority in the organization's medium term strategy 2002-2007. It brings together the different things UNESCO is doing--better management of the environment, education, etc., and has a social and ethical foundation. (Comment: when asked by our health attache several months ago for a definition of "human security," Goucha responded everything that affected people.) Goucha listed the various publications that have been issued (including the highly anti-American report "Promoting Human Security: Ethical, Normative and Education Frameworks in the Arab States" issued last summer) and conferences held. Among other regional conferences, a conference will be held in Egypt in 2006 on human security in the Arab states.

[¶3.](#) Most of the experts' interventions focused on the importance of human security, what is meant by human security, and what UNESCO should do. Remarks by Majid Tehranian, an expert from the United States, were representative. Among his comments: "Nation states are no longer as autonomous as they used to be; globalization blurs boundaries. States are not in command of their economies or societies. September 11 demonstrated this. So the framework must be an international dialogue. It used to be, during the Cold War, East vs. West; now it is North vs. South. Most conflicts are intra-state; most casualties are civilian. Rich countries bear a responsibility--ethical and practical--to pay attention to what is going on. The world is unequal. Afghanistan and Iraq are fights between nomadic societies and digital societies."

[¶4.](#) Bechir Chourou (expert from Tunisia who wrote the report on human security in the Arab world that is so critical of the U.S.) said that human security is multi-dimensional. The state in many parts of the world is a threat to human security. This puts UNESCO in a tight spot; it is being forced to tell some of the member states that they are a threat. (Comment: Given his track record, we wonder which ones.)

[¶5.](#) The South African charge delivered an intervention on the first day that in effect questioned the need for the project and asked how it meshed with UNESCO's core focus. Oddly, the second day he intervened again and said that South Africa fully supports the concept. The Indian ambassador also intervened to question the utility of the meeting, pointing out that this work is being done in other UN agencies. The U.S. delegation also intervened and raised doubts about the need for the proposed publication. It raised questions also about the process: would the publication be put out under UNESCO's name without Member States reaching consensus on it (referring to, without naming, the report on human security in the Arab world as an example of publications put out under UNESCO's name but not approved by Member States)?

[¶6.](#) UNESCO is determined to pursue its efforts in human security, and the effort is funded in the 2006-07 budget. The Secretariat says it will consult with experts broadly and involve more member states. A questionnaire was to be distributed on-line after the meeting. It will be sent to approximately 500-1000 "experts" but not member states.

[¶7.](#) Comment: We are concerned that this publication

will appear under the UNESCO logo with minimal input from member states. Much of what was discussed in terms of human rights is good and helpful and consistent with the U.S. goal to enhance democracy, human rights, and individuals' freedom and well-being. It would not be unreasonable to expect, however, that there will be efforts to insert statements that portray the U.S. as a threat to human security rather than as a main protector and that align with anti-globalization and anti-capitalism rhetoric.

OLIVER